

TALON TIMES

Mission: Plan, direct and control all air operations in support of amphibious forces, and provide combat-ready detachments to deployed Amphibious Ready Groups.

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FROM THE COMMANDER'S DESK

TACRON TWELVE
JAN/ FEB/ MAR 20 B

Dear TALONS, Families and Friends,

I hope that the Holidays were a positive time to reconnect and enjoy being together. We did our best to ensure that our operational commitments were met while allowing as many TALONS the opportunity to be home for the Holidays. I would like to thank those that stayed deployed to make this a possibility. It is that sense of team that makes me proud to serve as your Skipper.

This Spring our mission continued in the Pacific with Detachment (DET) TWO embarked aboard the USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD-6) in support of Amphibious Squadron ELEVEN and Amphibious Forces, SEVENTH FLEET. They began their detachment in January and quickly jumped into the COBRA GOLD 20 B bilateral exercise with Thailand. They also were an integral part of the success of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Unit's Certification Exercise and will complete a Fleet Synthetic Trainer to hone their operational skill.

DET THREE is working to complete their pre-deployment training and deploy in June to support Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDNF) in the Pacific. They will embark the USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD-6) and will participate in the TALISMAN SABER 20 B exercise with the Australian Navy and are scheduled to participate in the ULCHI FREEDOM GUARDIAN exercise with the South Korean armed forces. DET THREE, continue to work hard to prepare for your fast approaching deployment. Your biggest task may be to keep the XO out of trouble. Just kidding, the XO is ready for anything and excited to be operational again!

At the end of January, we supported the largest amphibious exercise on the West Coast in recent history known as Exercise DAWN BLITZ B.1 Your TALONS participated in Expeditionary Strike Group and Marine Expeditionary Battalion Operations directing and scheduling Air Operations for multiple Navy and Marine Air Squadrons at an unprecedented level. Their uncanny ability to bring order to potentially chaotic conditions was extraordinary. Well Done!



*TACRON TWELVE Commanding Officer,
CDR Daniel P. Hopkins*



Our TALONS continue to impress me with their generosity of spirit. They dedicate their volunteer time to many charities and events to include: The Armed Service YMCA and San Diego Food Bank. A minimum of 10 volunteers per month participate in the Neighborhood Exchange event which provides military families with donated groceries, clothing, books, and toys. Many also volunteer after working hours on their own initiative. Some of these organizations and events include icouldbe.org, the International We Love U Foundation, church events, Cub Scouts, dog park clean-up, youth sports coaching and set-up and breakdown for Finish Chelsea's Run. Keep up the good work and continue to be the bright beacon of hope for the community.

FROM THE COMMANDER'S DESK... *(Continued)*

I would like to address the elephant in the room know as Sequestration. Our operations at TACRON TWELVE will not be affected too dramatically in the near term because we do not have aircraft, ships or submarines to maintain. Well before Sequestration, we operated within our means and always tried to capitalize on sunk cost efficiencies when travelling and minimizing the number of deployed personnel as appropriate. I can say that since we deploy in support of FDNF, we get special consideration and funding priority.

Bottom Line: There is no reason to panic.

Finally, I wish each and every one of you a prosperous San Diego Summer. It continues to be an honor to serve with you. Always set the example and do things the TALON WAY!

Best Wishes,
CDR Dan "Disco" Hopkins
Dan.hopkins@navy.mil
619-437-2594





FROM THE MASTER CHIEF'S DESK

By CMC ELLIS



Greetings, Talon Family!



*TACRON TWELVE Command Master Chief,
ACCM (AW SW) William P. Ellis*

Time flies when you're having fun – I just never really realized how fast! This will likely be my last entry in the Talon Times before I transfer at the end of May. The two years I have spent here flew by so fast I'm still wondering where they went.

I have, indeed, had a lot of fun here at TACRON – and I attribute that to the fact that I am surrounded by great people here. I can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate the positive attitude, overwhelming team spirit and the camaraderie that I have experienced on a daily basis within the squadron. Thank you all for making this such an enjoyable tour!

Relieving me will be Master Chief Sam Taylor, who is coming from the Marine Corps base in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. He will report to the command by early July. I can only ask that you support him as well as you have supported me.

As a squadron, you have impressed me every day with your pride, professionalism and talents. Whether forward deployed supporting the mission, participating in training evolutions and opportunities, serving in an external TAD or volunteer capacity or even on the softball field, football field or basketball court, you have given each task your best and performed unbelievably well. Please continue to do so and continue to support each other with the same enthusiasm as you have during my tour. Always remember that if you're not having fun, you're in the wrong line of work! Great things and bright futures are out there for each of you – SO GO GET 'EM!!

Farewell, Shipmates!





The Ombudsman Corner



Phone: 1-619-796-2478

www.tacron12ombudsman@gmail.com

Hello Talons! This will be my last newsletter as the TACRON 12 Command Family Ombudsman. It has been my sincere pleasure and honor to serve as your Ombudsman and I wish all of you the very best! Take wonderful care of each other and let the Navy and the community help take care of you by reaching out and taking advantage of all of the incredible resources available to you as military families. Get out there and enjoy this beautiful city and all that it has to offer! Best wishes to you and yours!

Sincerely,

Your TACRON 12 Command Family Ombudsman

TRICARE Contract Transition



On April 1, 2013, the TRICARE West Region contract will transition to and be managed by United Healthcare Military & Veterans (UHC M&V). Make sure you understand the timing and key information about the TRICARE transition. For questions about TRICARE services or care with dates of service on or after April 1, 2013, contact United Healthcare Military & Veterans at 1-877-988-9378.



This Military OneSource Navy portal allows access to Navy-specific news, resources, and social media with a simple click. Navy's fleet and family programs provide a full array of services, information, and tools to assist Sailors and family members in achieving personal and career goals as they excel in meeting the obligations and challenges of Navy life through resilience and self-reliance.

Call. Click. Connect.

[http:// www.militaryonesource.mil/ navy](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/navy)

FOCUS: Family Resiliency Training™ for Military Families

Strengthening the Home Base!

FOCUS (Families Over Coming Under Stress™) provides resiliency training to military children and families. It also teaches practical skills to meet the challenges of deployment and reintegration, to communicate and solve problems effectively, and to successfully set goals together and create a shared family story.

Site Location

Naval Base San Diego

Dolphin Alley

San Diego, CA 92136

Fax 619.556.6076

Naval Base Bldg. 265

Phone 619.556.6075

[SanDiego@ focusproject.org](mailto:SanDiego@focusproject.org)

Fleet and Family Support



FFSP provides services through the Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC), such as relocation assistance, new parent support, deployment services, clinical counseling services, financial management counseling, family employment services, family advocacy, and the transition assistance programs to assist service members and their families in need.

*****One Call Serves All!*****

For 24/ 7 appointment scheduling for clinical counseling, relocation assistance, Resume assistance, and financial consultations at any Navy Region Southwest FFSC, call 1-866-923-6478. For more information on Fleet and Family Support Programs, please [visit their website](#).



San Diego Military Outreach Ministries

San Diego Military Outreach Ministries is a community supported charity that reaches out to young enlisted military families in San Diego with a broad range of helping services.

(For more details, visit www.sandiegomom.org, or call **619-461-4164**)



San Diego Things to Do!



Balboa Park Calendar Highlights:

April 25-28

Art Alive! 2013

Floral designers interpret works of art from the permanent collection.
([The San Diego Museum of Art](#))

April 6 – May 12

Soapbox! The Audience Speaks

Crowd-sourced exhibition that uses engaging new technology and interactive processes to allow visitors the opportunity to rate images both online and in the gallery. ([Museum of Photographic Arts](#))

Now thru June 1

EXPLOR-O-RAMA

Interactive exhibits from San Francisco's Exploratorium.
([Reuben H. Fleet Science Center](#))

February 22 – June 2

Dr. Entomo's Palace of Exotic Wonders

Explore the wonderful world of bugs in all their splendor. Resembling an old-fashioned circus sideshow, Dr Entomo's "Palace of Exotic Wonder" explores the truth, myths and mysteries surrounding some of nature's most curious creatures - many of them alive and on view.

(San Diego Natural History Museum)

February 2 – June 12

Lowrider Legends! Exhibit features Lowriders.

The amazing engineering and cultural phenomenon that is such an integral part of San Diego Automotive Museum.

October 12, 2012 - June 30, 2013

Access/ ABILITY

This award-winning exhibit, created by the Boston Children's Museum, features hands-on activities and real personal stories that inspire visitors of all ages. Learn phrases in American Sign Language, type your name in Braille, try a hand-pedaled bike and take part in a multi-sensory City Walk! Powerful and highly-interactive, Access/ ABILITY teaches respect, understanding and that people living with disabilities lead active, fulfilling and meaningful lives.

(San Diego Museum of Man)

~~*~*Events In & Around San Diego*~*~*~*

Apr. 18 - May

Annual Del Mar National Horse Show

The most prestigious horse show in Southern California offers more than \$300,000 in prize money and attracts more than 3,000 horses to the equestrian complex at the Del Mar Fairgrounds in coastal Del Mar. www.delmarnational.com

Apr. 19-21

49th Annual Lakeside Rodeo

Bareback bronco rides, calf roping and other traditional rodeo competitions, along with food and crafts, bring the Wild West to life in Lakeside, located in San Diego's East County. www.lakesiderodeo.com

Apr. 20-21

88th Annual Coronado Flower Show

The nation's largest flower show under a tent takes place in Spreckels Park in Coronado. Flower exhibits are placed around a central gazebo which becomes the stage for live entertainment and trophy presentations. www.coronadoflowershow.org

Apr. 21

Fallbrook Avocado Festival

Since the 1960s, tens of thousands of avocado lovers converge in Fallbrook, located in San Diego's North County to sample avocados, check-out the crazy cooking contest entries, buy funky avocado-themed gifts and enjoy bands, live entertainment and friendly beer gardens. www.fallbrookchamberofcommerce.org

Apr. 21

Annual San Diego Earth Fair

Set in Balboa Park, the celebration of planet Earth features a children's parade, booths, educational exhibits, music and earth-friendly food. www.earthdayweb.org

Apr. 27-28

Mission Federal Art Walk

The free visual and performing arts celebration takes place in downtown San Diego's colorful Little Italy neighborhood and is the largest art event in San Diego.

www.missionfederalartwalk.org

Apr. 27-28

40th Annual Adams Avenue Unplugged Festival

The free two-day festival features 180 musical performances of acoustic music held on four outdoor stages and 22 indoor stages along a two-mile expanse along Adams Avenue from the neighborhoods of Kensington to North Park.

www.adamsavenuebusiness.com

May 3-5

Annual Old Town Fiesta Cinco de Mayo

A celebration of Mexican spirit and culture, the Fiesta Cinco de Mayo is held in Old Town, the birthplace of San Diego and features music, food and entertainment for the entire family. www.oldtownsandiegoguide.com

May 5

Carlsbad Spring Village Faire

One of the largest one-day street fairs in California features hundreds of exhibitors, international food and children's rides in the coastal city of Carlsbad. www.carlsbad.org

May 10-12

Gator by the Bay, Zydeco, Blues & Crawfish Festival

Knee-slapping good times abound at Spanish Landing on Harbor Island. The event features 25 bands on five stages, dance lessons, Cajun cooking demonstrations and delicious crawfish. www.sandiegofestival.com

May 19

20th Annual Sicilian Festival

The music, dance, culture and cuisine of Sicily come to the streets of downtown San Diego's Little Italy neighborhood with four performance stages, a parade of costumed dancers, musicians and more. www.sicilianfesta.com



Have a Safe and Happy Spring Talons!

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The mission of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is to provide, in partnership with the Navy and Marine Corps, financial, educational, and other assistance to members of the Naval Services of the United States, eligible family members and survivors when in need and to receive and manage funds to administer these programs.

Our Vision: We are a private, non-profit, volunteer, service organization. As a Center of Excellence, we are committed to ensure that all available resources are used to assist personnel of the Naval Services - active, retired, and their eligible family members to achieve financial self-sufficiency and find solutions to emergency needs.

NMCRS San Diego, FSO

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society

Bldg. 270, 3115 Dolphin Alley PO Box 13470

Naval Base San Diego

San Diego, CA 92170

e-mail to: Barry White, barry.white@nmcrs.org

Hours: Mon-Fri 0800-1600

Phone: (619) 238-1587/ 1589

DSN: 526-8283

Fax: (619) 531-0083

Additional Services: [Thrift Shop Info](#), [Visiting Nurse](#)

NAVY COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES



Visit your local **Navy College office!** Navy College professionals provide educational services world-wide, anytime, anyplace to Sailors and their families, supporting their life-long learning goals and the Navy's mission. The following link provides information regarding the SOCNAV program and other benefits available to military families. Take full advantage of all of the awesome resources **Navy College** has to offer and go back to school!

Website: [http:// www.soc.aascu.org/ socnav/ SpousesAidResources](http://www.soc.aascu.org/socnav/SpousesAidResources)





American Red Cross

As a reminder, the American Red Cross announced that it will move to a single telephone number for its emergency communication services.

All military members and their families can use one number: **877-272-7337 (U.S. Toll Free)** to send an urgent message to a service member. This means that all military members and their families can use this single number to initiate an emergency communication, regardless of where they live.

A call to **877-272-7337** allows Red Cross emergency communications services to put military personnel in touch with their families following the death or serious illness of an immediate family member, the birth of a service member's child or grandchild or when a family faces other emergencies.

Additional Red Cross services such as case management and emergency financial assistance also are available. For those stationed overseas, the three options for calling will remain the same: calling **877-272-7337** direct, accessing the number through a military operator or calling the local Red Cross station.

**For more information about the American Red Cross, and how you can reach out and donate, visit their website at [http:// www.redcross.org/](http://www.redcross.org/) **



Talons • In • The • Mix



Detachment 2 MAT/ ERT

“Training the Marine Corps Way”

By ITI Constance Gilbert

On a cold day in January, Marine Augmentation Team (MAT)/ Emergency Response Team (ERT) Talons from DET 2 took to the pool to qualify for the underwater egress trainer onboard Camp Hansen, Okinawa. The Modular Amphibious Egress Trainer (MAET) simulated realistic emergency-type aircraft ditching scenarios, providing MAT/ ERT Talons significant training in case they experienced such a real world event. The MAET is a mandatory requirement to ride in a Marine Corps Helicopter overwater.



Pictured Above: Modular Amphibious Egress Trainer (MAET) Okinawa, Japan 2013

(From left to right) AC3 Nguyen, AC3 Ohay, AC2 Ybarra, AC3 Natividad, AC2 Spicer, AN Chargo, AC2 Bolosan, ACAR Waller, AC3 Suarezcampos, AC2 Stewart, and MAET instructor.

AC2 Stewart gave us some personal insight to the MAET experience: “Upon initial realization that I would be attending the MAET/ ERT Helicopter Dunker training, I was not enthused in the slightest. Not being the strongest swimmer, the training sounded like an absolute nightmare. I was not comfortable with being strapped onto a chair and turned upside down in the water! Once the instructors began to go over everything we would be accomplishing, I began to feel more confident. We were taught how to use breathing devices in all sorts of ways: out of water, under water and even upside down! It took some getting used to but with the help of the instructors and fellow Talons I was able to conquer my initial fears and overcome all of the obstacles enroute to getting the certification.

The most significant obstacle I had to overcome was the ‘flip chair’. The flip chair simulates a helicopter flipping upside down as it begins to sink. As it flips, you have to follow some steps to egress successfully. Moreover, these steps have to be accomplished while wearing a blindfold! By this time, I was confident, albeit hesitant. I remembered everything that I was instructed: I braced for impact, unbuckled my strap, reached for the exit and before I knew it, I was out. Truth be told, it may have taken me a few extra tries to accomplish the event successfully (I did panic a bit during one of the tries) but in the end, I had completed something that I did not initially think I could accomplish. The training was great. I am grateful for the experience and will remember everything I learned in the MAET for years to come.”

Detachment 2 MA T/ ERT

“Training the Marine Corps way”

(Cont'd)

MAET replicates various aircraft and it is used to instruct passengers on the proper techniques to exit submerged and submerging vehicles. The class MA T/ ERT Talons experienced was a one day course consisting of classroom instruction and practical application in Shallow Water Egress Trainer(SWET), Helicopter Emergency Egress Device Systems (HEEDS) and the MAET trainer.



Pictured Above: (From left to right) MAET Instructor, AC3 Natividad, and AC2 Spicer.

The MAET is a helicopter simulated disorientation trainer. Looking like the body of a helicopter it is capable of being submersed into water and spins upside down, simulating a realistic helicopter crash.



Pictured Above: (From left to right) ACAR Waller, AC2 Spicer, and AC2 Ybarra.

Detachment 2 MAT/ ERT

“Training the Marine Corps way”

(Cont'd)

Students are required to breathe through a tube in their mouths without a water mask. “You are taught to breathe through your nose all your life, explained Mike C. Davis, manager of Survival Systems Hawaii. “In this situation you have to reverse that method and breathe with only your mouth.” This training gives Sailors the necessary gear and knowledge needed in the event a helicopter mishap occurs over water and the proper techniques required to egress the submerged aircraft.



Pictured Above: AC2 Stewart

Despite the cold and wet environment surrounding them, the 10 Talons participating in the course successfully completed all required training, providing DET 2 the operational flexibility to send personnel ashore by Marine Helicopter when required and called to action!



BRAVO ZULU DET 2

MAT/ERT, TALONS!

WELCOME ABOARD!

AC1 MURPHY
AC2 BISCHOFF
AC2 RAMIREZ
AC2 MATLOCK
OSSN HARRIS
ACAA EPPS



Fair Winds and Following Seas...

OSC LEMAK
AC1 JONES
IT1 FECTEAU
AC2 COOPER
OS2 MIRANDA
AC2 DAIGLE
AC2 MCINTOSH
AC2 KRAMARCHUK
YN3 STEINKE



A W A R D S

Navy Commendation Medal

ACC MOBLEY

Navy Achievement Medal

OSC LEMAK
NC1 VIEW
LS1 SALAMANCA
AC2 ALI
AC2 YBARRA
AC2 ALI
AC3 WARD

Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

AC1 MURPHY

Good Conduct Medal

AC3 WARD
AC2 EARLY

A W A R D S

(cont'd)

Flag Letter of Commendation

OS1 TUIASOSOPO

AC2 LAESSIG

AC2 MCINTOSH

AZ3 MARROQUIN

Letter of Appreciation

LS1 SALAMANCA

AC3 SHOUSE

AC3 MALLETT

ANDALTY

ACAA GOMEZ

Enlisted Air Warfare Specialist

AC2 SPICER

AC3 NGUYEN

ACAN DELLORSO

Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist

AC2 YBARRA

OS2 JOHNSON

OS2 WALTERS

OS3 MORPHIS

AC3 SUAREZCAMPOS

P R O M O T I O N S

IS3 VENZANT



TACRON TWELVE has had an eventful and memorable 2nd Quarter of FY-13 filled with gaining countless military achievements. As a Command, we have excelled in many aspects, whether it has been through attaining warfare qualifications, in-rate promotions or training & developing the skills to successfully execute & augment each mission we are set forth to complete. Let us unite & continue to travel down that same road of starting a chain reaction of many great Quarters to follow!

Keep up the outstanding work Talons!



* == GALLERY == *



Pictured Above: TACRON TWELVE personnel prepare for the Navy PRF during Command PT. Leading the group and motivating our Sailors to give it their all are Command Fitness Leader, IS2 Parsons (middle), and Assistant Command Fitness Leaders IT2 Richards (to her left, facing left), and AC3 Ward (to her right, facing left).



Pictured Above: DET 2 proudly representing TACRON TWELVE during Spring Detachment of 2013 on the flight deck of the USS BONHOMME RICHARD.



Pictured Above: OSPREY taking off and landing aboard the USS BONHOMME RICHARD during DET 2 of Spring 2013.



Pictured Above: TACRON TWELVE shows support for a fellow Talon, OSSN Thomas (middle), before he embarked onboard the USS PRINCETON for a 6-month deployment. We wish him the best of luck as we keep him in our thoughts and continue to show support in any way we can!



APRIL

LCDR MURRAY

AC3 NGUYEN

LT WILLCOX

ISSN VENZANT

AC3 MALLETT

ACAN BROWN

AZ3 MARROQUIN

ACAR DARROUGH

AR CHARGO

MAY

AC2 BERTELS

AC2 PULLA

AC2 DAIGLE

AC2 STEWART

OS2 CROWE

AC2 HARKINS

AN DALEY

JUNE

LCDR BOGIE

AC2 COOPER

MAJ HILL

IT3 PLAYER

OSC LEMAK

AN AYALARIOS

